

House Republican Press Release

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Noujaim: Waterbury Bridges to be Named for “Big Red One”; First Infantry Division



HARTFORD- Representative Selim Noujaim announced today that two bridges in the City of Waterbury would be renamed to honor the United States Army’s First Infantry Division under provisions of an amendment to a Department of Transportation bill the state House of Representatives has passed.

Under the amended bill, bridge number 4320A on I-84 eastbound over Washington Street and bridge number 4320B on I-84 westbound over Washington Street will both be designated "In Honor of the United States Army's First Infantry Division."

Representative Noujaim pursued this request at the urging of John Lawlor, who serves as the Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Waterbury, and who served as a Major with the division.

The 1st Infantry Division, often referred to as “The Big Red One” has a proud and storied past. It began in 1917 during World War I under General John “Black Jack” Pershing led it into France as the First American Expeditionary Force. During WWII, the 1st Infantry Division was the first to reach England, the first to fight in North Africa and Sicily, and the first to hit the beaches of Normandy on D-Day. They were also the first to capture a German city: Aachen.

The First Infantry Division remained in Germany after WWII until 1955, when they were redeployed to Fort Riley, Kansas. In Vietnam, the Big Red One was once again the first division called on to fight. In 1970, it returned to Fort Riley, and became dually based, its 3rd Brigade going to West Germany.

In 1990, the 1st Infantry sent more than 12,000 soldiers to Saudi Arabia in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm, where they led the charge into Iraq. It also had critical roles in Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990’s. In 2003 The Big Red One was deployed to Northern Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“This is a great way to honor an incredible and historic military division,” said Representative Noujaim. “The 1st Infantry Division has been at the forefront of every major military engagement the United States has fought in since World War I, and I suspect it will always be at the vanguard of American freedom.”